Social Media Tools Analysis

This report provides a curated list of ten social media sites explaining my analysis of each site using the Seven Building Blocks of Social Media.

Overview

In this report, ten social media sites were analyzed using the seven building blocks described in Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Sylvestre's reading, "Understanding the functional building blocks of social media". For each social media site, I will provide the following:

- Describe the audience and purpose using Alexa.com to confirm the demographic information for each.
- Describe the site's typical daily usage and interaction.
- Conclude with recommendations for each.

1 - Bebo

Audience and Purpose

Bebo's social media site is intended for college aged students ranging from 18-24, and attracts mainly males. Unlike Facebook and Twitter, this site allows users to create their own profile page and set it up however they like. It captures the attention of most online gamers and creative individuals that want room for self-expression and can curate, discover and share digital content online.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for BEBO

1. **Identity** – Users are allowed to create their own personal space according to their own liking. Online gamers and creative individuals can use the site as a way of self expression by posting videos, or photography, and joining community groups of their own liking.
2. **Conversations** – Bebo allows individuals to meet new like-minded people and build their self-esteem. The site allows for real time messaging and postings, very similar to Twitter.
3. **Sharing** – Users are allowed to consume, create, discover, curate and share digital content. Bebo is very similar to MySpace, in which you can create your own skin and add whatever content pleases you.
4. **Presence** – Bebo shares your site publicly and let's other users know when was the last time you visited the page, and when you first joined as a member.
5. **Relationships** – Bebo allows the user to see how many other users have visited the profile page, and allows users to make a comment on your profile page.
6. **Reputation** – Bebo posts testimonials on their page to give new users an idea of what current members have said about their experience using this site.
7. **Groups** – Users are allowed to create personal online groups to connect with specific individuals. The Social Inbox features on Bebo offers updates from Gmail, Yahoo! Mail and AOL Mail to stay connected with outside contacts within Bebo's site.

Conclusion and Recommendations

After researching Bebo's social media site, I found that although it was intended for the general audience to connect freely worldwide, it has been conquered primarily by online gamers, video enthusiasts, and photographers. Bebo is also very similar to MySpace and resembled the same format for the profile pages. If you are interested in an environment in which you can freely create a page that allows for self-expression, and where you can connect with other creative individuals, this would be the right place.

2 - MeetUp

Audience and Purpose

MeetUp is intended for all adults over the age of 18, both male and females, but attracts more females, and user groups from age 34-65. The purpose of this social networking site is to allow users to find community groups to be a part of in an effort to improve themselves, or their community. There are all sorts of groups for personal and professional needs, and for people to meet each other to discuss their common interests.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for MeetUp

1. **Identity** – The site is very similar to Facebook. The design templates are controlled and maintain a consistent look and feel for all profile pages. Individuals are allowed to upload a profile image and share a biography on them.
2. **Conversations** – The conversations are open to the only the community group. The users can choose to enter however many characters they would like and isn't controlled by a certain count of text.
3. **Sharing** – MeetUp allows users to share on their Facebook page from their site. Members are allowed to create a community group for a fee of $12 a month, or join a community group and pay the organizer of that group. Photography is loaded on a separate tabbed page within that group, but individuals cannot share digital content.
4. **Presence** – MeetUp allows users to share publicly where they are going to meet, but doesn't allow other users to currently see where that user is. Groups post a meeting location, and other members respond if they will attend, allowing other members of that group to see who will be there.
5. **Relationships** – MeetUp is social networking site that uses the community groups as a way for members of that group to connect and establish a relationship, whether it is a professional connection, or a personal connection.
6. **Reputation** – MeetUp has current staff members listed on their "About Me" page listing their roles and responsibilities with Community Specialists that work towards improving the site and the experience members have. They are in place to address issues encountered by members immediately.
7. **Groups** – According to MeetUp.com, they are the largest networking site with 129,937 active community groups.

Conclusion and Recommendations

MeetUp social networking site is a great way to connect with community groups in your area based on your own interests, professionally or personally. The intent is to meet other members, and build relationships and beneficial connections. I highly recommend this site for individuals that want to socialize, make friends, find singles for dating, or build business relationships.

3 - Pinterest

Audience and Purpose

Pinterest attracts mainly females with ages ranging from 25-34. It is a tool for collecting and organizing digital content, and text according to the user's specific interest. Many members of Pinterest use this for personal and business needs as a way to share information with others.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for Pinterest

1. **Identity** – The user profile in Pinterest are very minimal. The idea is for the user to "pin" items that he/she likes, and add it to their page.
2. **Conversations** – Pinterest only allows users to comment on someone's personal Pinterest page, but it's not meant to be used as a social networking site.
3. **Sharing** – Pinterest allows a member to add videos and photography. Other users reference Pinterest to learn how to do something, learn about something, or share in interest with other users.
4. **Presence** – Pinterest doesn't show information on who is online, and who is not. It is simply a page for a user to view information shared by others, and to use it for their own personal needs.
5. **Relationships** – This site is meant to find information to learn about a person, place, or thing, but not to build relationships, or network with other groups and people.
6. **Reputation** – Pinterest has users sign a privacy statement and agreement to not use the site to harm others. It provides tips asking new users to be courteous and considerate of others postings, and not to make judgements. It is a free posting site for everyone to use based on their own liking and needs.
7. **Groups** – Pinterest is a posting and sharing site, and doesn't focus on forming community groups that can connect and meet. Most people on this site will visit to gain something personal from others.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Pinterest is an excellent site that can be used to share and collect digital content based on the users specific interests. I recommend this site for anyone who wants to learn more about a place or a thing related to business, health and fitness, home improvements, art and crafts, and much more.

4 - Blogger

Audience and Purpose

Blogger is largely used by young adults ranging from age 18-24, and mainly females. The purpose of this site is to provide a space for users who want to post topics of discussion to share with others. Most users access their blog from home.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for Blogger

1. **Identity** – A Blogger member can set up a blog page and customize the design template to add a more personalized shared area.

2. **Conversations** – The blog is intended for users to freely share their comments and ideas on a specific topic. The blogs allow users to a converse within the blog posting.
3. **Sharing** – Access Controls lets the user decide who can read and who can write to the blog. The user can have a group blog with multiple authors as a communication tool for small teams, families and other groups. As a single author, the user can create a private online space for collecting news, links, and ideas, to keep or share with as many readers as they want.
4. **Presence** – Blogger has a low presence element. Users can blog at any given point in time and continue the conversation when it is convenient, and doesn't provide a virtual check in.
5. **Relationships** – Blogger has community groups that were established by different users for people to find blogs of interest.
6. **Reputation** – Blogger uses the same security features as Google. For anyone who has already established a trust relationship as a Google Account member, the reputation is viewed highly.
7. **Groups** – Blogger allows the user to set private or public groups to their liking. The user can also find other blog groups of the same interest.

Conclusion and Recommendations

I recommend Blogger to any writer, or blog enthusiast. It allows users to set up their blog as private, or public, and you can join other public blog groups. Another advantage is that the user can personalize their blog space and make the page more interesting for readers.

5 - Athlinks

Audience and Purpose

Athlinks is a social networking site for endurance athletes in sports such as; running, triathlons, cycling, biking, cross country, track and swimming. The age range of this audience group is 35-44, are predominantly professional, working males.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for Athlinks

1. **Identity** – The site allows users to display their name, age, gender, profession, location, and they can upload an image of themselves.
2. **Conversations** – Athlinks provides an environment where athletes can connect with others to find the encouragement needed for their endurance training, and gather tips from others.
3. **Sharing** – The site allows members to publicly share any digital content.
4. **Presence** – Athlinks doesn't provide virtual check in features. Users can post where they are from, but no other information about location is available.
5. **Relationships** – Athlinks allow users to track and communicate with training partners, club and team members, favorite vendors and other members.
6. **Reputation** –
7. **Groups** – This site provides an environment for people to connect and share a common interest. They have the option to post on their wall, or send a private message.

Conclusion and Recommendations

I highly recommend this page for athletes. The user can immediately share their list of past races completed, with details of finishing time and other detailed information about the race. A person

wanting to share their results and also connect with other athletes sharing the same interest would benefit greatly from Athlinks.

6 - CafeMom

Audience and Purpose
CafeMom is a social networking site for mothers that are single or married, and would like to give and get advice, be entertained, and make friends. The main user group of this site ranges from age 45-65+.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for CafeMom

1. **Identity** –The site provides users to set a personalized profile page, but doesn't display age, gender, name, profession or location. Every user has a set user name.
2. **Conversations** – Women connect by clicking on the different community groups according their needs. They can find conversation, advice or entertainment information.
3. **Sharing** – Users can share comments, or participate in micro blogging. Some users are set to private access of their information and you have to request to be a friend.
4. **Presence** – This site is more private. The profile pages only share the user name, but don't provide the location (city and state) information.
5. **Relationships** – CafeMom provides community groups for moms to connect. They blog and comment within these specific groups of interest and share their thoughts and ideas.
6. **Reputation** – This site has a good reputation and is followed by many moms worldwide. They have another social networking site called "Latina Mothers" and "The Stir".
7. **Groups** –CafeMom provides groups that allow women to connect and build relationships. You can ask for permission to view a person's private page once the connection has been made.

Conclusion and Recommendations
I didn't like that the page doesn't share where individuals come from, but I really like that they have a social networking site that allow other mothers to freely share advice and can make friends. This site is great for someone who would like to build new friendships, or feels they have a lot to share about parenting.

7 - WeeWorld

Audience and Purpose
WeeWorld makes games that inspire social creativity with a focus on iconic design and playful self-expression. Users fall within the ages of 18-44, but predominantly from groups within the age of 34-44. After visiting this site, it appears as parents would create an account for their children. All users have reported having children.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for WeeWorld

1. **Identity** –Users can create a personal profile page and customize it to their liking using an Avatar to represent who they are.

2. **Conversations** – WeeWorld has minimal opportunities for connecting with other users. The site is strictly for gaming and creating avatars.
3. **Sharing** – This social media site doesn't allow for digital content sharing.
4. **Presence** – WeeWorld is private and doesn't show other users where others come from. The site is made for younger groups to play and create in a safe environment.
5. **Relationships** – WeeWorld is a non-relationship building site and has no connection to other users.
6. **Reputation** – WeeWorld has over 60 million users worldwide.
7. **Groups** – No community groups are available within this site.

Conclusion and Recommendations

I recommend this site for pre-teens up to the age of 14. It's safe, and doesn't provide a way for a child to connect with strangers and other users.

8 - Catster

Audience and Purpose

Catster is a social networking site for cat lovers. It provides advice and information on caring for your cat, and provides social groups to connect with other cat lovers. Although the site is open to all age groups, the predominate age range of users on this site are 45-54 with no children.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for Catster

1. **Identity** –Catster provides profile pages that can be customized and personalized to the users' liking.
2. **Conversations** –Cat lovers use this site to connect with other cat loving individuals. This common interest provides the basic element to begin a conversation.
3. **Sharing** –Users can upload digital content and share photos on this site.
4. **Presence** – User can share their name, age, gender and location.
5. **Relationships** – Many users on this site can relate to each other because they are all cat lovers, and own a cat as a pet.
6. **Reputation** – Catster allow users to post on their Facebook page.
7. **Groups** – This site has different community groups that users can participate in. They can also create a group based on a specific interest.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This social networking site is great for any cat lover that wants to connect with other individuals that own a cat.

9 - Tumblr

Tumblr is a social networking site where users can post text, photos, quotes, links, music, and videos from the browser, phone, desktop, email or wherever the user happens to be.   The audience group range from 18-24, and are mainly female users.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for Tumblr

1. **Identity** – A user can customize their profile page, from colors to the theme's HTML.
2. **Conversations** – Tumblr provides a way for people to find community groups with common interests to connect and build relationships.
3. **Sharing** – Users can post text, photos, quotes, links, music, and videos from the browser, phone, desktop, and email.
4. **Presence**– Tumblr allows users to share their name, age, location and gender.
5. **Relationships** – Users have the option to connect with other users and build relationships.
6. **Reputation** – Tumblr was established in 2007 and has over 8 million posts and over 16,000 MeetUps.
7. **Groups** – Tumblr is very similar to Twitter and allow you to follow others and participate in community groups.

Conclusion and Recommendations
I recommend this for an individual looking to post all different types of digital content, or someone who does everything on their phone.

10 - 43 Things

Audience and Purpose
43 Things is a social networking site for users who want to post their goals and find support and encouragement to help them achieve them. The audience age group is 18-24, college females.

Seven Building Blocks Analysis for 43 Things

1. **Identity** – Users have to create an account to view other profiles.
2. **Conversations** – This site allows user to connect with other people's goals, and to share your goals with everyone else. You can make a comment on someone's goal, and following other users, but sending a message isn't available.
3. **Sharing** – 43 Things allows users to upload a profile image, but that's about it.
4. **Presence** – This site doesn't share any demographics, or personal information about the the user. It only allows the user to upload an image and set a user name.
5. **Relationships** – Relationships are built through common goals, and supporting each other on them.
6. **Reputation** – Over 3 million people have posted their goals on 43 Things.
7. **Groups** – Community groups aren't available, but you can find a list of users that have the same goal as you do.

Conclusion and Recommendations

I recommend this site for anyone who would like to share their goals with others, find other users that have the same goals, or would like to help and support others in achieving their goals.